

DRAFT
Transition to Adult Living
Implementation Team Meeting
March 3, 2004
Minutes

Welcome/Introductions/Minutes:

Mike Richardson called the meeting to order and welcomed participants. Everyone was introduced, noting that Courtney Smith was here from the National Governor's Association (NGA) for a meeting with the Implementation Team tomorrow. Mike noted that several Team members were involved with the Legislature on this last day and were unable to attend this meeting.

Mike mentioned that we had received feedback from several people after the last meeting and it was suggested that we needed to have a few minutes of discussion time to clear up questions or receive input from Implementation Team members and Task Group members who wanted to make comments. This may involve meeting past 3:30pm to have sufficient time.

Mike asked if there were any questions or problems with the minutes from the February 4, 2004 meeting. A suggestion was made to place the minutes on the Transition to Adult Living (TAL) link on the Department of Human Services Website. This will be done in the future. (www.dhs.utah.gov Click on Transition to Adult Living Icon)

Process for Handling Task Group Recommendations:

Barbara Thompson explained the process Task Groups should follow in making recommendations to the Implementation Team. The recommendation should be in writing, be discussed at the Implementation Team meeting and be approved or sent back to the Task Group for further work. When the recommendation is approved and applies to a specific agency; the agency representative(s) on the Implementation Team should follow that recommendation through to implementation and report back.

Task Group Reports:

Website—Kelly Colopy announced that she has conducted one focus group with youth in Provo and is scheduled to do another group in Roosevelt tonight. Several other focus groups are also scheduled in the next couple of weeks.

The youth were shown examples of websites and asked to give input. Most youth wanted the website to be simple, not too flashy, and get them directly to the information they needed. Many youth need computer classes and access to computers. Some youths were excited about the website and others showed little interest in using a website right now. Data collection will be finished by early April.

Transportation:

Amanda Singer explained that the Governmental Immunity Act does not cover the liability issues for foster youth when operating a vehicle. However, they are trying to figure the costs for covering liability and see if the state would be willing to pay those fees. They are also exploring the issue of getting reduced car insurance, group rates, and reduced prices on purchasing cars.

Amanda presented a recommendation to the Implementation Team for approval on a process for DCFS to follow in assuring that, whenever possible, youth get the opportunity to take Driver's Education and obtain a Driver's License as part of their independent living program. **The Implementation Team approved this recommendation and it will be given to DCFS.**

An assignment was given to the Task Group to determine how many former foster youth 18-21 don't currently have a license and see if we can help them get drivers education and a license. (DWS will likely be able to help pay for the drivers education class as part of the employment plan.)

Employment/Training/Education:

Marie Christman reported on the work of several sub-groups:

1. Employment training and education services inventory—They had a demonstration today and were able to finalize the data collection tool. They will now begin gathering the information from many sources including DWS, contract providers, DCFS, mental health, etc.
2. Resources and contacts in secondary schools inventory—This group will provide information regarding transition specialists, Title 7 and other resources in the secondary schools. (These inventory lists from groups 1 and 2 will eventually link up with Utah Cares and will have multiple uses.)
3. Continuum of services—This group is developing several initiatives or recommendations. All DWS & DCFS representatives have been given the assignment to go back to their Regions and talk about their pathways and services with one another. This effort is to begin the process of educating each other and to coordinate their services on a local level. Another recommendation this sub-group is working on is piloting a model in the northern area (where there is a mix of urban and rural communities) with DWS, DCFS, DYC, and WIA youth providers, that will take it deeper than the assignment just mentioned. This pilot will examine not only pathways (how to access services) but also coordinated plans, record keeping and information sharing. They will target seniors in high school first.
4. Education & Training Vouchers (ETV)—This group is working on the process to get ETV money to all eligible youth (18-21) for college or vocational training. They are recommending using the current DWS (or contract providers) process because they already have a similar voucher process in place. Discussions with Job Corp and Adult Ed to identify any gaps are occurring.

Physical and Mental Health:

Vicki Cottrell reported several items this group is working on.

1. With Medicaid Newborn Plus, most foster youth are eligible for Medicaid until age 19. They have discovered some youth aren't making this connection as they leave foster care. DCFS and BES (Bureau of Eligibility Services in the Health Department) are working out a process now to correct this.
2. Several group members are working now to figure/estimate the cost of extending Medicaid coverage until age 21 as allowed under the Foster Care Independence Act.
3. The group is working on a model for wraparound mental health services for youth needing specialized services as they leave state custody.
4. Many youths have been in residential care and have not learned coping skills and many of the day-to-day skills needed for living in the community. There needs to be additional support and attention given to this population before they are released from custody.
5. The group is doing an inventory on what services are available and what is still needed in terms of health and mental health services.

*****The issue was discussed that perhaps the inventory tool being used by the Employment/Training/Education Task Group may be adapted so this group could use it in gathering information, as well. A copy of the Inventory Tool was given to Vicki Cottrell for follow up with the Health Department or DWS to get help with the computer work.**

Life Skills:

Jane Lewis made a recommendation that the Ansell-Casey Life Skills assessment program be adopted as the tool to be used with foster youth in the Independent Living program. **This was approved.**

They have outlined a timeline for assessing youth and training them on the life skills covered in the program. They will begin with those who are now seniors since they will be leaving custody sooner than younger youth.

By April, all Independent Living Coordinators will be trained on how to use the assessment tool.

The Child and Family Team (CFT) in DCFS will be used to assess, implement and review progress on a regular basis.

They are developing a checklist that will be helpful as youth transition out of state custody.

*****The question was raised—How will those youth 18 and over who are already out of the system get the life skills training they need? The task group was asked to look at this issue.**

Housing:

Richard Walker reminded us that the 16-17 year olds are generally provided for in the foster care system so his group was looking primarily at the 18-21 year old youths.

There are some issues regarding the emancipation laws and parental consent which pose some barriers to rental contracts and leases, etc.

The Task Group plans to identify some landlords/property owners who are willing to take some risks with these youths when they understand that we are supporting and helping them to become responsible adults.

There are various levels of preparation needed. Some may do better in a group home setting until they are able to live on their own. The group would like to do a model program with support services that may be modeled around the state.

Mentoring:

Lisa McDonald reported that this group is reviewing various mentoring programs, doing youth surveys, and will use local youth councils to get youth feedback and participation in the mentoring process.

Lisa explained a Youth Mentoring Pilot Project they would like to do in Western Region. The program is designed with recruitment, training, supervision and the preparation for mentors to be successful with youth. **Lisa will have a copy of the pilot program emailed to each of the Implementation Team members so it can be reviewed and feedback given. They would like to begin implementation soon so the Implementation Team approved the pilot program pending any objections after Team members had a chance to review the written copy.**

This Task Group will also develop a pilot program using senior retired mentors that will focus on vocational training.

*****Marie Christman wanted the help of the Mentoring Task Group to fill out the inventory the Employment/Training/Education group is working on. Marie will contact Lisa.**

Transitional Support Fund:

Herman Hooten reported that the Independent Living Coordinators in DCFS are working on this issue but don't have any recommendations yet.

Other Issues:

Savania Tsosie reminded people of the importance of helping minority youth connect to their own communities. Many of the task group members mentioned that this issue was being addressed. The ethnic offices are in Richard Walker's division and he will update all of those directors about the Governor's Transition to Adult Living Initiative. Those offices can be a resource to the task groups.

We were reminded as we plan to look at all of the elements necessary for good outcomes and use best practice models.

Mike Richardson asked each Task Group to look again at their Charters, update the deliverables, work specifically on those items and bring any new recommendations to the Implementation Team for review and approval.

Herman Hooten announced that U Foster Success is having a rally at the Capitol on May 5th for Foster Care Month.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 7, 2004 at 2:30pm in Room 304 at DHS.

Attendees:

Implementation Team—

Mike Richardson
Jim Anderson
Don Carpenter
Marie Christman
Vicki Cottrell
Tiffany Martin
Lisa McDonald
Mary Shumway
Savana Tsosie
Richard Walker

Excused—

Richard Anderson
Daniel Dayton
George Delavan
Barbara Feaster
Cindy Gates
Steve Goodrich
Steve Jardine

Support Staff—

Jane Broadhead
Herman Hooten
Suzette Martellaro
Amanda Singer
Barbara Thompson

Task Group Members & Guests—

Sione Lui
Tom Sitake
Scott Sneddon
Courtney Smith
George Dimas
Pam Russell
Dave Steele
Melissa Larsen
Lorilyn Neel
JoeAnn Bartlett
Jane Lewis
Michelle Murray
Chris Chytraus
Tim Holm
Mary Jane McGuire
Jim Jensen

Bob Haywood
Wendy Hughes
Kathy Dimick
Ken Hull
Brad Tomlinson
Stacy Brubaker
Jolene Wyler
Ann Foster
David Evans
Stacy Gibson
Michelle Barnett
Angie Smith
Bonnie Athas
Kelly Colopy